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ABSTRACT

While librarians deliver a vital public service within diverse communities, they are often invisible in the community development process initiated by civic planners, activists, and local government officials. This book challenges librarians everywhere to get involved early and often by demanding a place at the community planning and development table. Chapter 1 reviews the many dimensions of community, including issues surrounding enterprise and empowerment zones, suburbs, edge cities, and "fortress America." Chapter 2 discusses the recognition that diversity is a vigorous hope for a new society and identifies the strains on community building created by income disparity and a growing inequity between rich and poor. Tying current library planning initiatives to community visioning initiatives is the focus of Chapter 3, and factors for successful community building are presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 provides examples of community building by librarians, cybercommunity building is discussed in Chapter 6, Chapter 7 connects examples of the work librarians do with comprehensive community building initiatives (CCIs), and Chapter 8 focuses on new models of work. The final chapter is a reminder for librarians that by joining past traditions to future opportunities with a sustained dedication to service, librarians will be valued as equal partners in community building enterprises. (AEF)

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